

REMARKS

Interview summary. The undersigned thanks the examiner for the telephone interview conducted on November 29, 2005. The interview centered on the §102 rejection of Claim 1 over Ha (U.S. patent no. 6,451,708). In particular, the question arose as to whether the first layer of Claim 1 could be read on Ha's layer 114, and the first and second masks on Ha's mask 120 at different processing stages. The undersigned pointed out that in Claim 1, the first mask has an opening over the second portion, while the second mask covers the second portion. An agreement was reached that the rejection would be overcome if Claim 1 is amended to recite that:

--the first mask does not cover the second portion; and
--the second mask is formed after the operations (ii) and (iii), i.e. after forming the first mask and etching the second portion.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102. Claims 1, 3-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) over Ha. Claim 1 is amended as discussed at the interview. Claims 3-11 depend from Claim 1.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103. Claim 2 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 over Ha in view of Wang (U.S. patent no. 6,541,324). Claim 2 depends from Claim 1. Wang was cited for teaching isotropic etching as recited in Claim 2. This teaching however does not cure the deficiency of Ha with respect to the features of Claim 1 as discussed at the interview.

New claim. New Claim 19 is supported by Figs. 7A, 8A, 9A. The first feature reads on wordline 160.

Any questions regarding this case can be addressed to the undersigned at the telephone number below.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on November 30, 2005.

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